

**ASSOCIATE DEANS COUNCIL  
JANUARY 14, 2004**

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert (chair), Doug Richards for Keith Belli, David Boles, Louis Capella, Diane Daniels, Luther Epting, Jane Greenwood, Dan Hollingsworth, Dinetta Karriem, Sue Minchew, Linda Morse, Gary Myers, Debbie Pepper, Gary Pike, Ruth Prescott, Mike Rackley, Lynn Reinschmiedt, June Schmidt, Butch Stokes, Robert Taylor, Jack White, and Thomas Bourgeois for Mike White.

Guests Present: John Boyle and Sharon Nobles.

Dr. Gilbert called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Consideration of Minutes:

- The minutes from the November 12, 2003 Associate Deans Council meeting were approved as circulated.

2. AOP's for review:

- OP 21.03 – Handling Graduate Student Academic Misconduct. Dr. John Boyle presented this draft operating policy as past chair of the Graduate Council. This policy was presented to Deans Council in October 2003 and was now being presented to the Associate Deans Council as requested by the Deans. Dr. Boyle gave a brief summary of the policy. Each department containing a graduate degree program will establish a Graduate Academic Misconduct Review Committee to review academic dishonesty cases and determining sanctions. The Office of Graduate Studies will establish a Graduate Academic Honesty Committee which will rule on graduate student appeals. Dr. Boyle discussed the procedures for handling course violations and programmatic violations.

Concern was raised about legal issues regarding permanent dismissal from the university. It was suggested that the policy should clearly state procedures providing the student notice of the charge and the adjudication process.

Dr. Boyle stated that the Graduate Council felt that graduate students should be handled differently than undergraduates. Thomas Bourgeois stated that the Office of Dean of Students is the official site for housing the records of student disciplinary action and suggested that it should also be the official site for the graduate student disciplinary records. He suggested that the Dean of Student serve as the secretary of the committee, a non-voting member. Academic

misconduct is a violation of the student code of conduct and is a discipline record.

Mr. Bourgeois also addressed the situation where an undergraduate student has an academic honesty offense and then subsequently enrolls in graduate school at Mississippi State University. He asked if this student would start out with a clean record, or if the student would have one incident of academic misconduct going into graduate school. If so, any subsequent incident would have to be treated as a second offense.

Another issue discussed dealt with college-wide programs, such as those of the College of Business & Industry and BSIS. Dr. Boyle stated that those could be handled through the graduate program office of the college.

An editorial change was suggested. Under the REVIEW section, "AOP" should be changed to "OP" since this policy was to be considered as an operating policy.

Dr. Gilbert asked the associate deans to discuss the policy with department heads and faculty. OP 21.03 will be presented for action at the next Associate Deans Council.

- AOP 12.07 – Undergraduate Academic Misconduct and Mississippi State University's Academic Honor Code. Ruth Prescott gave a brief history of the development of the University's Academic Honor Code. After the cheating incident during fall 2001, university administrators decided to undertake a process to let students and faculty know their responsibilities in maintaining ethics. A committee was put together, which resulted in the Academic Ethics Symposium with Dr. Don McCabe with the Center for Academic Integrity as keynote speaker. Dr. Lee appointed an ad hoc task force to recommend to the President additions or changes to the university's code of conduct as it pertains to academic honesty and cheating. The committee included faculty, students, the Dean of Students, and chair of the Academic Review Board; Ruth Prescott served as chair. The committee drafted an honor code and revisions to AOP 12.07, Undergraduate Academic Misconduct, were made. At the time the committee was going to present the policy to the President, Ms. Prescott became aware that the Graduate Council was developing their policy on handling graduate student academic misconduct. It was decided to present both policies and the honor code as a package. Drs. Dan Embree and Eve Mullen attended conferences presented by the Center for Academic Integrity during fall 2002 and fall 2003 and have brought back ideas and helpful information.

The ad hoc task force came up with the idea that students should pledge their commitment to integrity in the classroom and a pledge was included in the honor code. The task force also wanted each member of the university community to become aware of the provisions of the Academic Honor Code.

While reviewing AOP 12.07 for revision, some of the committee members wanted to include self reporting. The committee also decided that students accused of academic misconduct should be judged by a panel of their peers –

not faculty. The task force recommended that the Academic Honesty Committee consist of 12 undergraduate students with 3 alternates to serve two-year staggered terms. Case-specific faculty advisors from each college or school will be appointed as deemed necessary by the Secretary of the AHC. The Dean of Students will continue to serve as the secretary of the AHC (non-voting) and will convene hearings and maintain records. Data is clear that students are more harsh on their peers than faculty. Students on the committee will go through a training process and must meet certain criteria.

Another significant revision to the sanctions against academic misconduct is imposing an "XF" for the course. Any F for a course imposed for reasons of academic misconduct will be recorded as an "XF." The "XF" will remain on the transcript until such time as the student successfully completes an academic integrity course. Kansas State gives students the opportunity to participate in an hour ethics class. If they complete the course, the "X" designation is removed, but the "F" remains.

Task force members agreed that students should not be punished for not reporting violations. The question was asked whether the university would really give a student an F for not reporting violations. It was noted that the College of Veterinary Medicine at one time had an honor code that did take into consideration student who turned in other students.

Ms. Prescott stated that as an institution, we have not done a good job of presenting the code of conduct to the university community. Ideas suggested include peer discussions in the residential halls, presentations at new faculty orientation, timely reminders to department heads and current faculty of their responsibilities, and creation of a webpage. Dr. Embree highly recommended using the Yale webpage as an example. This is not about cheating on an algebra exam; this is about ethics.

It was asked if those students who reported incidents of misconduct would be protected. Students accused of violations have the basic right to know their accuser and to face their accuser. Anonymous accusers could be students who have a problem with fellow students.

Dr. Gilbert asked for reactions from the associate deans on signing the Pledge. In earlier years students signed a book. It was suggested that the Pledge be included on the Admissions screen on the website similar to the FERPA screen. It was asked whether we need a physical record. Faculty may include the statement on syllabi. Some include it on each paper or exam submitted for grades.

Luther Epting discussed the relevance of the "XF" grade on the transcript and how employers would react to this. Many times transcripts come after a person is hired. Prospective employers would want an explanation from the employee. An "XF" grade and record of academic misconduct would affect a student's ability to enroll in a professional school such as law school or medical school.

It was discussed that giving students the opportunity to remove the “X” by successfully completing an ethics course has merit. An “XF” would be an incentive to take the course.

The possibility of a web-based ethics course was discussed. A web-based course would be easier and less expensive for the university. Students would be charged for the course.

If students retake the course in which they received the XF grade and receive an A, the F will still be reflected on the transcript. Right now students get an F and an A and those grades are averaged.

The Kansas State ethics course is a one hour, pass/fail, 4-credit course. The content was developed by their Educational Psychology department. The course is limited to 10 students per class who must attend with the other students. Taking the course is the student’s choice – it is not required.

Thomas Bourgeois stated that students are entitled to due process and need to be aware of their rights. They can have an advisor with them at academic misconduct hearings.

Dr. Gilbert asked the associate deans to take the proposed Academic Honesty Code and revised AOP 12.07 back to their faculty for review, recommendations, and/or suggestions. The Code and AOP 12.07 will be brought back for action at the next Associate Deans Council.

- AOP 35.01 – International Programs. Dr. Gilbert announced that this AOP will not be voted on at this time. It will be brought back for action after he has had the opportunity to discuss rescinding the policy with Vice President Vance Watson.

### 3. Chairperson’s Report

- Provost Rabideau has asked the associate deans to be thinking about courses, whether we are teaching courses that need to be taught to the university. Are we teaching courses that don’t need to be taught now? Can you identify courses where there is little need? Are the courses we are teaching of appropriate size – too large and too small? Are classes too large for the classrooms? Are they taught in the best format? Would some be best taught on the web or shared across campus or shared with the Meridian campus?
- Annual planning forms are due in the summer. The Provost is planning to propose a more meaningful planning process. We may want to look at a different format or way to integrate from top to bottom. This is a very positive step. Dr. Rabideau wants to build on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century goals. We want a first class, student-centered, research university. Dr. Rabideau is very encouraged about this and realizes that students are the most important part of the university.

- Dr. Gilbert asked for feedback on fall break. A decision needs to be made in the near future about this fall. One option is to leave it the same as this year. One option is to move one or more days earlier in the semester. Engineering faculty were concerned that it was too much break before finals. Most Arts & Sciences faculty had argued against the break because they thought there would be a problem with students not returning after the break. The College of Architecture faculty were not supportive; classroom projects were due during that time; those students did not go home. Ruth Prescott stated that the main concern from the Faculty Senate was the fact that too many course labs were being missed. It has been suggested that staff be given an extra day during spring break and classes meet on Labor Day; each day will only be missed once. Labor Day is arbitrary.

Butch Stokes stated that changing the exam schedule had more to do with the scheduling of dead days than the actual fall break. The Calendar Committee has asked the Student Association to find out when they would like to have fall break scheduled. More students have expressed the same desire to separate fall break days.

- The Vice President for Student Affairs search committee is conducting airport interviews of six candidates this week and one videoconference interview next week. The committee will recommend 3-4 names to the President for campus interviews.
  - Candidates for the Director of Sponsored Programs are being interviewed this week; the fourth candidate is coming to campus within the week.
  - Three candidates have been scheduled for campus interviews for the Vice President of Research position. The interview schedule will be on the website.
  - Grisham nominations are due January 16. Schilling teaching proposals are due February 16 to the Deans and March 1 to the Provost Office. Nominations for Giles Distinguished Professors are due February 16.
4. Sharon Nobles discussed articulation agreements. She and Lynn Reinschmiedt attended the first articulation agreement meeting with IHL. Dr. Bill McHenry had difficulties with articulation agreements in effect since 1995. They returned to campus and made changes. On October 18 Sharon attend the MAC conference; community college representatives shared the problems they were having. Everyone was asked to make revisions in three weeks. Revisions to MSU's agreements were made and sent to the Board. George Rent, Phil Oldham, and Sharon Nobles attended the next meeting in November. Jackson State had turned in some revisions; Ole Miss needed a month; USM needed 3-4 weeks. USM had many changes to make and also MUW. We have received a call from Copiah-Lincoln Community College and met with them for three hours. The Board is to vote on the changes April 1. Dr. McHenry has retired, and Dr. Malvin Williams will be our new chair.

Gary Myers asked if community colleges are matching up with USM. We have a common core system with community colleges. Descriptions are to be the same.

There are things the community colleges want to do to get corrections made. The Registrar's Office is working with the community colleges to get them in sync with MSU. The biggest problems are in science and mathematics.

Dr. Gilbert stated he is optimistic that the problems can be resolved. MSU has many community college transfer students who should not be penalized for attending a community college. Courses will articulate and they will know what courses will articulate.

5. Prerequisite Checking. Butch Stokes discussed problems transfer students are encountering. Some community college courses do not articulate to our courses due to differences in course content. If the community college course does not articulate to our course, the prerequisite checking system cannot recognize that course as a prerequisite for one of ours and the student will not be allowed to register for our course. The Registrars Office has been working on building prerequisite checking for over a year. All prerequisites are built except for a large portion of Arts & Sciences; the plan is to have these in place in time for summer and fall 2004 pre-registration. Given the problems encountered with articulation, changes need to be made to the prerequisite checking system. As delivered, the system has only an on or off switch – and if on, gives a fatal registration error when the prerequisite is not met. The system needs to operate in a warning mode as well as a fatal error mode. The warning mode will be most useful during early registration periods. The prerequisite warning would be recorded in the system as proof that the student was given the warning and provide this information to the faculty. When registration for summer begins in March, we want our students to have an easier time with registration. We will also have to decide how we want to close out and re-check prerequisites as we close out one term and begin another. Some of the questions we have to answer are: Do any of the colleges want to convert from fatal to warning as we move from spring to summer and summer to fall and again fall to spring? At what point in time will we reconcile the course drops for prerequisite failures and then not allow the students to register in courses for which they do not have the required prerequisites?

One of the initial thoughts on a prerequisite warning system is that the system will probably have to be implemented on a college by college basis. For example, Education would be the deciding authority on their courses. Other colleges should have their input on a student's enrollment in their college. Colleges should treat students the same when dealing with prerequisites.

When we process course drops for prerequisite failures, we must provide the students with adequate notification so that they may add other courses back to their schedules in order to remain full time. To do this they need to know about the drops before they show up for next semester's classes. Currently, we mail letters to all students who have had a course "force dropped" from their schedule for any reason so that we may ensure that they are properly notified. Instructors and departments have the ability to input prerequisite overrides to allow instructors to give their consent for students to be in their class. Dr. Myers stated that with the large number of sections in Arts & Sciences, students do not want to take English Comp I; we would have to make sure basic English courses stay open and have students put back into those basic courses.

6. Other Business:

- The Office of Institutional Research has received a request from IHL asking how many students are enrolled in on-line courses. Dr. Pike stated the OIR needs to have this information by Friday, January 16. Dr. Pike will contact the department chairs and asked the associate deans to make them aware that he will call. This is going to become an issue with the Board.
- At the end of last semester Leslie Bauman sent department heads assessment planning forms. This is required by SACS. 100% of the departments have assessment programs. Of 180, only 6 have complete the form. Institutional Research will be back with the departments on that. Dr. Pike asked the associate deans to encourage department heads to complete the forms.
- Mike Rackley reported that Banner upgrade is scheduled for January 19. The system will be down over the weekend.
- Jack White announced that senior Frank E. "Smith" Lilley, Jr., has been named a George Mitchell Scholar in international studies. Smith joins 11 other students in the nation for this prestigious award. He will study at the University of Limerick next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.